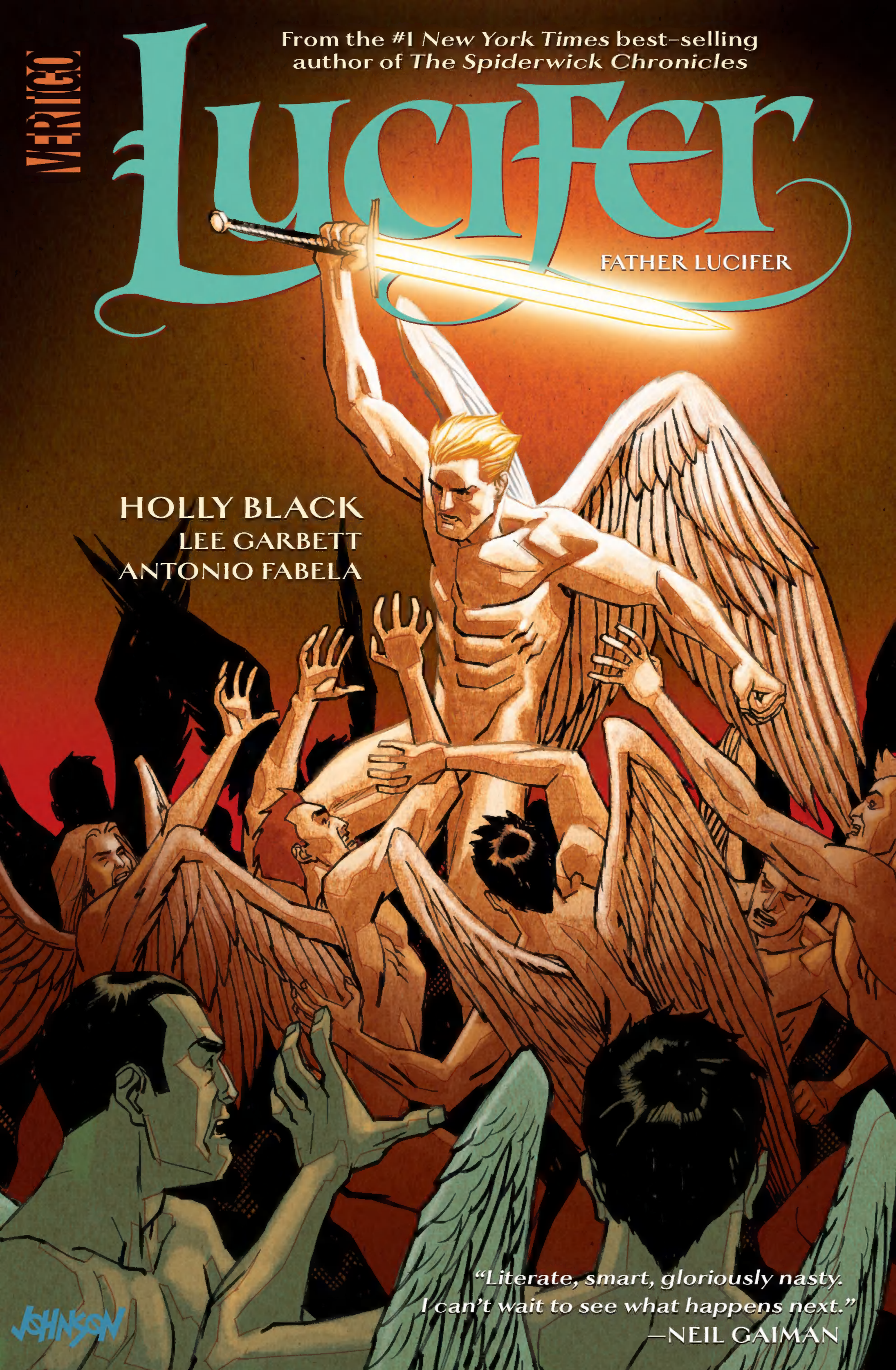
VERTIGO

From the #1 *New York Times* best-selling author of *The Spiderwick Chronicles*

# Lucifer

FATHER LUCIFER

HOLLY BLACK
LEE GARBETT
ANTONIO FABELA



*"Literate, smart, gloriously nasty. I can't wait to see what happens next."*
—NEIL GAIMAN

# Lucifer

FATHER LUCIFER

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# Lucifer

## FATHER LUCIFER

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LUCIFER VOL. 2: FATHER LUCIFER

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THE PARADOX OF ***EVIL*** IS THIS: WHY DOES A ***BENEVOLENT*** CREATOR ***ALLOW*** IT?

AFTER MUCH ***DEBATE,*** THEOLOGIANS DECIDED THAT ***EVIL*** MUST SERVE SOME ***GREATER GOOD.***

SILVER DOLLARS?

THERE'S GOTTA BE MORE'N TWO DOZEN.

THEY DO NOT WANT TO DWELL ON THE ***OTHER*** POSSIBILITIES: THAT THE CREATOR IS ***NOT*** SO BENEVOLENT AFTER ALL.

OR THAT THERE ***ISN'T ONE.***

*"But who prays for Satan? Who, in eighteen centuries, has had the common humanity to pray for the one sinner that needed it most?"* — Mark Twain

# Father Lucifer

## Part One: Practicing to Deceive

AND SO WE HAVE SETTLED ON THIS REASSURING EXPLANATION: WE HAVE ***EVIL*** BECAUSE WE HAVE ***FREE WILL.***

AFTER ALL, IF WE DON'T HAVE ***BAD*** CHOICES, HOW CAN WE KNOW ***GOOD*** ONES?

WITHOUT SUFFERING, HOW WILL OUR ***TRUE*** NATURES BE REVEALED?

WE MUST HAVE THE ***BITTER*** TO KNOW THE ***SWEET.***

BUT IF THAT'S SO, IS THE ***OPPOSITE*** ALSO TRUE?

IS THERE ANY USE FOR THE ***DEVIL*** IF THERE'S NO ***GOD?***

IN THE SILVER CITY, THE ARCHANGEL RAPHAEL GLIDES TOWARD THE TOWER ABOVE THE PRIMUM MOBILE WHERE THE THRONE OF HEAVEN SITS ***EMPTY.***

HE IS TROUBLED.

METATRON...

...I WAS SUMMONED BY A HUMAN ***BOY*** WHO HAD ***STOLEN*** MY ***FEATHER.***

IT HAD THE ***FEELING*** OF ***FATE*** TO IT.

I TOLD YOU OF MY PREMONITION, THAT YOU HAD A ***PART*** YET TO ***PLAY,*** RAPHAEL.

IT IS NOT OUR NATURE TO DECEIVE, YET IT SEEMS ***YOU*** ARE ***HIDING*** SOMETHING.

THE ADVERSARY SOUGHT INFORMATION ABOUT A LONG-BURIED ***SWORD.*** A PIECE OF IT WAS IN HIS ***CHEST.*** WHY WOULD THAT BE?

WHY DO THE ANGELS SAY THAT GABRIEL FLEW HERE ON WHITE WINGS AND THAT ***YOU*** THREW HIM BACK TO ***EARTH?***

AND WHY DO YOU ***HIDE*** HERE, ***BROODING?***

I WILL *TELL* YOU.

THOUGH YOU WILL WISH YOU COULD *UNKNOW* THE *TALE.*

"AFTER THE PRESENCE LEFT US, I WAS *LOST.*

"I COULD NOT *FLY.* I COULD NOT *SING.*

"EVEN AS THE *ADVERSARY* MADE HIS *MOVE* TO STEAL THE THRONE OF HEAVEN FOR MICHAEL'S DAUGHTER, I COULD NOT STIR MYSELF TO ACTION.

"WHAT WAS MY *PURPOSE,* I WHO WAS CREATED TO BE THE CHANCELLOR OF HEAVEN?

"THEN, FINALLY, THE PRESENCE *SPOKE* TO ME."

"THE PRESENCE *CALLED* UPON ME TO SEND HIM GABRIEL, WITH A *SWORD* THAT HAD BEEN LONG FORGOTTEN.

"HE TOLD ME THE SWORD WOULD BE USED AGAINST *LUCIFER*.

"I *BEGGED* OUR FATHER TO LET ME GO INSTEAD. LET *ME* WIELD THE SWORD. LET *ME* DO SOMETHING, *ANYTHING*.

"BUT HE CHOSE GABRIEL, OUR DISHONORED BROTHER, FOR THIS MISSION.

HE SHOULD HAVE *CHOSEN ME*.

GABRIEL RETURNED *WITHOUT* THE SWORD.

*LUCIFER* WAS STILL *ALIVE*.

IT WAS THE PRESENCE WHO WAS *GONE*.

*DEAD!*

NO. YOU *LIE!*

COME *SEE* FOR YOURSELF.

LUCIFER KILLED *OUR FATHER* FOR *REVENGE* AFTER GABRIEL'S FAILURE.

I WOULD *NOT* HAVE *FAILED.*

THAT *THING?*

YOU'RE CLAIMING OUR FATHER DIED AND THEN HIS BODY TRANS-FORMED INTO...*THAT?*

*IT CANNOT BE TRUE!*

"YOU SAW A *LIVING* THING?"

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA.

EXLUX

ARE YOU **WELL,** SIR?

I **SOLVED** a MYSTERY, MY SIDE ISN'T BLEEDING, AND I MANAGED TO **DITCH** GABRIEL.

WHAT **EVER** COULD BE **WRONG?**

I'M GOING FOR A WALK.

ANOTHER ONE?

ONCE, LUCIFER DEFINED HIMSELF IN OPPOSITION TO HIS HEAVENLY FATHER.

NOW THERE IS NO ONE TO ***OPPOSE.*** NO ONE TO ***ESCAPE.*** NO ONE TO ***HATE.***

HE KEEPS TURNING THAT ABSENCE OVER IN HIS MIND, DELIBERATELY ***PROVOKING*** HIMSELF, AS A HUMAN MIGHT POKE A TONGUE INTO THE ***SOCKET*** OF A LOST TOOTH.

PERHAPS EVEN THE DEVIL CAN ***MOURN.***

GOD IS DEAD.

THERE IS NO MORE ***SIN,*** NO MORE ***SALVATION.***

SHRISH

FWOOOMPH

I GUESS THE CAT'S OUT OF THE BAG.

GOD IS DEAAADD!

NEWARK, NEW JERSEY.

LORIN HAMMON, HOW DID YOUR MISSION GO?

DID YOU DO AS I BID YOU?

YEAH, I ASKED AROUND THE NEIGHBORHOOD ABOUT GABRIEL. PEOPLE WERE FREAKED OUT AFTER THE OLD SQUAT GOT BURNED DOWN.

YOU DIDN'T HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH THAT, RIGHT, RAPHAEL?

RIGHT?

I SET THE FIRE.

AS THE CHANCELLOR OF HEAVEN INSTRUCTED ME.

THAT'S WHY I NEED TO KNOW WHAT YOU'VE DISCOVERED.

TO WEIGH MY SINS.

ONCE, GABRIEL WAS GETTING ***DRUNK*** WITH SOME GUYS UNDER A BRIDGE AND HE STARTED TALKING ABOUT HELL.

DISCUSSING ***ESOTERIC TORMENTS.***

IT ***CREEPED*** PEOPLE OUT.

THEY FIGURED HE MUST HAVE BEEN A ***PREACHER*** OR SOMETHING.

"AND THEN HE WENT AWAY FOR A WHILE. WHEN HE GOT BACK, HE WAS A MESS. DRANK ***CONTINUOUSLY:*** VODKA, PAINT THINNER, MOUTHWASH, WHATEVER.

"***NONE*** OF IT AFFECTED HIM.

"NOTHING WORSE THAN A ***DRY DRUNK.***"

IS THAT ALL?

YOU DIDN'T FIND OUT ***MORE?***

THERE'S A HOMELESS GUY, ***HARRISON BAUM.***

HE SAW SOMETHING THE NIGHT GABRIEL GOT BACK, BUT HE WOULDN'T ***TALK*** TO ME.

HE'S IN A SHELTER NOW.

HARRISON BAUM?

GO ***BACK*** AND GIVE HIM ***THESE.***

THE THRONE ROOM, **HELL.**

THERE IS AN ***EMISSARY*** FROM THE ***PRINCE OF HELL.***

WHO ASSUMES ***THAT*** MANTLE?

SHOULD I MANGLE HIM? PULL OUT HIS GUTS AND WEAVE THEM INTO A ROPE FOR HIM TO SWING FROM? SHOULD I CRACK HIS SKULL LIKE A WALNUT?

LET'S HEAR ITS MESSAGE.

***SPEAK.***

***LORD TAKEHIKO,*** SON OF THE MORNINGSTAR, RIGHTFUL HEIR OF HELL TWICE OVER, COMES TO TAKE BACK HIS ANCESTRAL THRONE.

ABDICATE NOW, LILIM, OR FACE HIM IN BATTLE THREE DAYS HENCE.

KILL IT.

WAIT. ***WAIT!***

ASMODEUS WISHES ME TO INFORM YOU THAT HE CAN GET LORD TAKEHIKO TO BE REASONABLE.

HE WANTS YOU TO CONSIDER ***MARRIAGE*** TO HIS NEPHEW. YOU COULD RULE TOGETHER, UNITING THE LILIM AND THE DEMONS.

KILL IT *SLOWLY.*

YOU'RE *NOT* REALLY GOING TO *FIGHT,* ARE YOU?

YOU *CAN'T* LEAVE YOUR THRONE.

CAN'T I?

BRING ME MY *ARMOR.*

DON'T BE SO HASTY..THE *COMPACT!*

I SAID *BRING ME MY ARMOR.*

You are cordially invited to preside over a duel for the rulership of Hell. A box seat will be provided for your comfort, and bloodshed for your amusement.

YOU AGAIN? I TOLD YOU I DIDN'T WANT TO TALK TO YOU. NOW, *FUCK OFF.*

I BROUGHT YOU SOMETHING.

BLACK JACK TAFFY?

I HAVEN'T SEEN *THOSE* CANDIES SINCE I WAS A KID.

PLEASE. ANYTHING WOULD BE HELPFUL.

I GUESS I WON'T GET RID OF YOU ANY OTHER WAY.

"I DON'T LIKE EVEN *THINKING* ABOUT THAT NIGHT.

"GUY IS PASSED OUT *COLD,* RIGHT?

"WHEN HE WAKES UP, HE DOESN'T EVEN KNOW *WHERE* HE *IS.*

"THEN SHIT STARTS *MOVING* IN THE ROOM.

"OVER AND OVER, HE'S MUMBLING..."

*THE PRESENCE IS GONE, BUT THE PRESENCE WILL LIVE AGAIN. THE PRESENCE IS GONE, BUT THE PRESENCE WILL LIVE AGAIN.*

IZANAMI-NO-MIKOTO, ROTTING BLOSSOM OF YOMI, SEEKS AN AUDIENCE.

INTERESTING.

I WOULD SPEAK WITH YOU ALONE.

AND IF I REFUSE YOU?

IF I IMPRISON YOU?

WHAT WILL YOU DO THEN, FELLOW QUEEN?

"I HAVE BEEN IMPRISONED IN A REALM LIKE THIS BEFORE.

"MY HUSBAND PUSHED A ROCK OVER THE ENTRANCE TO YOMI, SEALING ME INSIDE.

"I WOUND UP ***RULING*** THE PLACE.

"IMPRISON ME AT YOUR PERIL."

GIVE US THE ROOM.

MY SON CHALLENGED YOU FOR YOUR KINGDOM.

YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT HIM, DID YOU? LUCIFER NEVER TOLD YOU.

PRINCE OF HELL TWICE OVER. I GUESSED.

I CAN MAKE IT SO HE *FORFEITS.*

I CAN ENSURE YOUR VICTORY.

AND WHY WOULD YOU DO THAT?

BECAUSE WHAT *I* CARE MOST ABOUT IS REVENGE ON THE MORNINGSTAR.

ALL I NEED FROM YOU IS ONE VERY SMALL THING TO GET IT.

AND WHAT IS THAT?

DO NOT CALL OUT TO LUCIFER. DO NOT LOOK FOR HIM IN THE CROWD AT ANY POINT DURING THE BATTLE. DO NOT CALL OUT HIS NAME.

ONLY THAT?

YES. A SMALL PRICE FOR A SURE VICTORY.

I NEED *NO* HELP IN BATTLE.

ARE YOU SO SURE?

THEN GO AHEAD. CALL TO HIM.

BUT KNOW WHAT THEY SAY ABOUT YOU.

THAT YOU ARE ***BESOTTED*** WITH THE MORNINGSTAR, LIKE A SCHOOLGIRL.

OR LOYAL LIKE A DOG.

BUT I THINK YOU'RE NEITHER OF THOSE THINGS.

I THINK YOU ARE A ***QUEEN.*** AND I THINK YOU WILL NOT ***RISK*** YOUR KINGDOM.

YOU'RE RIGHT.

I ***AM*** A ***QUEEN.***

TIME WILL TELL.

YOU REALLY THINK I CAN DO THIS?

I THINK YOU'RE THE *ONLY* ONE WHO CAN.

MAZIKEEN HAS HIS LIGHTBRINGER POWER.

BUT YOU ARE A PIECE OF LUCIFER HIMSELF.

AND *HELL* RUNS IN YOUR *VEINS.*

BEELZEBUB'S PALACE. HELL.

DO YOU REALLY THINNNK HE CANNN DEFEAT HER INNN BATTLE?

AT THE VERY LEAST, IT WILL BE ENTERTAINING TO WATCH HIM TRY.

MOTHER.

I DIDN'T EXPECT YOU. HAVE YOU COME TO WISH ME *LUCK?*

I AM A GODDESS. I DO NOT *WISH* FOR LUCK.

I *BESTOW* IT.

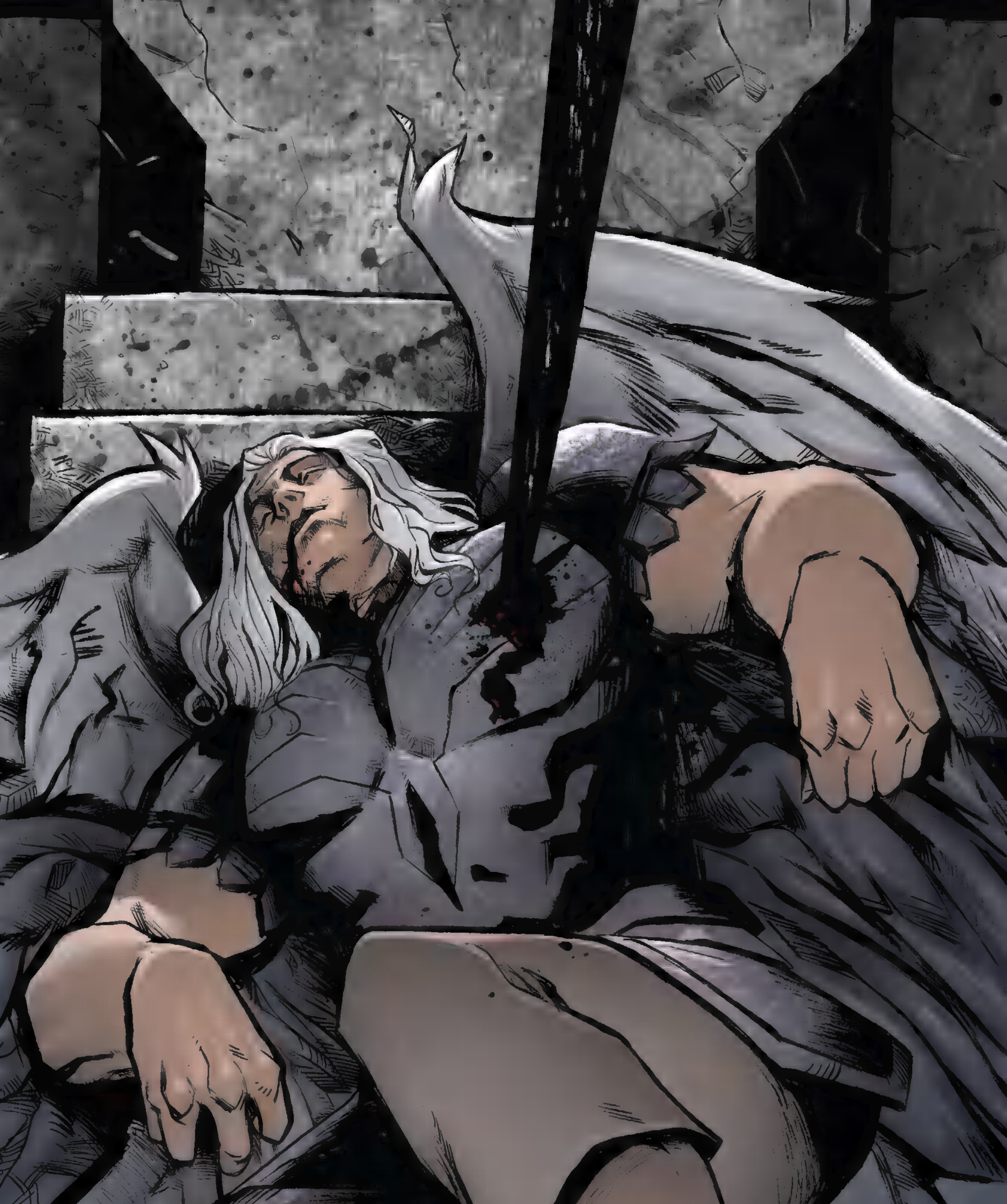
THE SILVER CITY.

PLEASE, METATRON, WE SEEK AN *AUDIENCE.*

THERE HAVE BEEN SOME DISTURBING RUMORS.

THERE ARE RUMORS. HUMANS CLAIMING THE PRESENCE IS *NO MORE.*

YOU *MUST* SPEAK WITH US!



HERE'S TO YOU, DAD. ONE LAST DRINK TO SPEED YOU ON YOUR WAY.

GOOD-BYE AND GOOD RIDDANCE.

NOT AGAIN.

LET ME GUESS. YOU'VE COME TO CHALLENGE ME TO A DUEL.

OR MAYBE YOU'VE COME TO ACCUSE ME OF A MURDER.

NO...

...I'VE COME TO CONFESS TO ONE.

JOHNSON

EX LUX, LOS ANGELES.

YOU ARE THE ARCHITECT OF THE FALL OF HEAVEN, LUCIFER. THE ARCHI-TECT OF MY MISERY.

# Father Lucifer Part Two: The Not-So-Fortunate Fall

IF YOU'RE MISERABLE, RAPHAEL, I'D SAY YOU NEED TO SHIFT THE BLAME ***HIGHER.***

REMEMBER WHEN YOU WERE ***ONE*** OF ***US***, WHEN YOU ***LIVED*** WITH ***US*** IN THE SILVER CITY AS OUR ***BROTHER?***

WHEN THE WORLD WAS ***NEW*** AND ***GOOD...***

YOU'RE BEING ***maudlin.***

I'M ***DRUNK.***

***HOW*** CAN I BE DRUNK?

WHAT HAVE ***YOU DONE*** TO ME?

*"To lie is so vile, that even if it were in speaking well of godly things it would take off something from God's grace..."* —Leonardo da Vinci

THIS IS A BAR. GETTING EVERYONE DRUNK IS WHAT WE DO.

AND THIS IS HOW YOU *CHOOSE* TO SPEND ALL YOUR *GIFTS!*

WELCOME BACK FROM *NOTHING*, BROTHER. IS THAT WHAT YOU WANTED, TO BE THE *PRINCE OF NOTHING?*

*LORD OF NOTHING?*

YOU GAVE UP YOUR *KINGDOM*, YOU GAVE AWAY PIECES OF *YOURSELF*, AND YOU NEARLY DESTROYED THE *WORLD*, AND FOR WHAT--A GLORIFIED *SUICIDE?*

SO WHAT DID YOU *FIND* OUT THERE THAT WAS SO *IMPORTANT?*

I am NOT SURE I HAVE THE *WORDS* TO TELL YOU.

NO ONE HAS *INVENTED* THEM YET.

YOU LEFT US.

OUR FATHER LEFT *FIRST.*

AND *YOU* CAN LEAVE NEXT.

I *MURDERED* METATRON.

MAYBE YOU SHOULD STAY AFTER ALL.

MEDJINE HAS BEEN ***HIDING*** IN HER BROTHER'S ROOM FOR TWO ***WEEKS.***

HE BRINGS HER PEANUT BUTTER ***SANDWICHES*** AND TOMATO ***SOUP*** AND LEFTOVER HALLOWEEN ***CANDY.***

EVERY MORNING SHE GETS UP ***EARLY*** AND HIDES IN HIS ***CLOSET.***

SHE KNOWS SHE'S GOING TO GET ***CAUGHT*** EVENTUALLY, BUT SHE HASN'T ***YET.***

WHEN HIS MOMS ARE AT ***WORK*** AND HE'S AT ***SCHOOL,*** SHE CAN WATCH ***TELEVISION*** ALL DAY LONG.

ONLY A FEW DAYS UNTIL THE MAIN EVENT.

WHO IS GOING TO BE THE NEW ***RULER*** OF HELL?

I DON'T KNOW, TED, BUT THE ***BATTLE*** IS LIKELY TO BE ***EXCITING.***

DCNN WHO WILL BE THE NEW RULER OF HELL?

MAYBE I ***AM*** GOING CRAZY.

TODAY SHE DECIDES SHE NEEDS ***FRESH AIR.*** SHE'S BEEN ***INSIDE*** TOO LONG.

THE LAST FAMILY SHE LIVED WITH USED TO TALK ABOUT ***DEMONS*** ALL THE TIME.

NOW SHE'S ***SEEING*** THEM, TOO.

MEDJINE WONDERS IF THE ***WORLD*** CHANGED, OR IF ***SHE*** DID.

BLOOOOOOOOD.

GIVE ME A ***TASTE*** OF ***BLOOD*** AND I WILL TELL YOU YOUR ***FUTURE.***

WHAT ARE YOU ***LOOKING*** AT?

THE IMP?

YOU SEE IT, TOO?

OF COURSE.

I'M ***NOEMA PRESTO.***

NICE TO MEET YOU.

GABRIEL HAS BEEN IN *HELL* BEFORE.

I'VE BEEN WAITING A LONG TIME TO *SINK* MY *TEETH* INTO YOUR HOLY *FLESH.*

AFTER HE WAS MADE MORTAL, HE SPENT WHAT *FELT* LIKE *CENTURIES* IN ITS TERRIBLE *EMBRACE.*

HE NEVER WAS GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO SEE ITS *BEAUTY.*

HELL COULD BE A REAL *TOURIST* DESTINATION.

IF IT WEREN'T FOR ALL THE *SUFFERING.*

*AUUUUUGH!*

CARE FOR A GO?

BUT MAYBE WITHOUT *SUFFERING* THERE CAN BE NO TRUE *CATHARSIS.*

SHE REALLY APPRECIATES THE *FLENSING,* SO I TRY TO SAVE THAT FOR *LAST.*

EXCUSE ME...

"...BUT THE *LADY MAZIKEEN* SUMMONS YOU."

MY LADY, WE HAVE A *PLAN.* YOU WILL CHOOSE *LUCIFER MORNINGSTAR* TO BE YOUR CHAMPION.

*NO.*

IF THIS *CHILD* IS LUCIFER'S ISSUE, THEN HE IS THE *BEAST* FORETOLD.

*FATED* TO *RULE* THE *WORLD.*

*FATE?* NO, I DO NOT THINK SO.

LADY MAZIKEEN!

*GABRIEL,* ATTEND ME.

THE REST OF YOU WILL GO.

I COULD BE YOUR CHAMPION.

NO.

STAND.

YOU ARE SWORN TO ME, YES?

YES, MY LADY.

I NEED YOU TO CUT OFF MY HANDS.

MY LADY... NO!

YOU CANNOT ASK THIS OF ME.

I HAVE ASKED IT.

QUICKLY.

THERE ISN'T MUCH TIME.

THE APARTMENT OF **JILL** AND **NOEMA PRESTO.**

YOU SURE YOUR **MOM** DOESN'T **MIND** ME BEING OVER WHEN SHE'S NOT HOME?

NAH.

SHE WANTS ME TO MAKE **FRIENDS.**

BUT WE **MOVE** AROUND **A LOT.**

AND WE'RE KIND OF **WEIRD.** SHE'S A **MAGICIAN.**

**RABBITS** OUT OF **HATS.** THAT KIND OF THING.

SO I'M ALWAYS ON THE LOOKOUT FOR **FELLOW WEIRDOS.**

NO OFFENSE.

NONE TAKEN.

SO, **DEMONS,** HUH?

MOM SAYS IT'S BECAUSE THE ANGELS AREN'T DOING THEIR JOB.

I KEEP **FEELING** LIKE SOMETHING'S ABOUT TO HAPPEN.

MAYBE IT ALREADY HAS.

PERHAPS YOU SHOULD BE A *BIT* MORE *DISCREET?*

I *KILLED* HIM!

WITH MY *BARE HANDS!*

OKAY, IT WAS *MOSTLY* WITH A *SPEAR.*

BUT MY *BARE HANDS* WERE HOLDING IT.

YOU ARE FULL OF *SURPRISES,* BROTHER.

AND I *LOVE SURPRISES.*

"METATRON SHOWED ME THIS *THING*... OUT THERE IN THE NOTHINGNESS.

"HE SAID IT WAS OUR *FATHER*.

"HE'D BEEN *HIDING* IT.

"HIDING *THINGS* ABOUT *GABRIEL*.

"LYING.

"I DON'T KNOW WHAT CAME OVER ME.

"I DIDN'T THINK *SIN* WOULD BE LIKE *THIS*.

"I DIDN'T *FEEL* ANY *DIFFERENT*.

"I DIDN'T FEEL *ANYTHING AT ALL*.

*FORGIVE* ME, LUCIFER. YOU HAVE TO *FORGIVE ME*.

THERE'S *NO ONE* ELSE *LEFT* TO DO IT.

EXPLAIN. TELL ME *WHY,* AT LEAST.

THERE'S NO TIME.

MY LADY...

VERY WELL. BUT THE *ANSWER* MUST BE *BRIEF.*

"WHEN LUCIFER LEFT ME WITH HIS *MORNINGSTAR POWERS,* MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS WERE AFRAID.

"THEY *FEARED* THAT I WOULD *RULE* OVER THEM AS AN *ANGEL.*

"AND SO I *AGREED* TO BE BOUND WITH THE *NAILS* OF THE GODDESS *NURTIA.*

"THEY *PINNED* SOME OF MY *POWER* IN PLACE, ALONG WITH MY BODY.

"AS I *RULE* OVER MY *SIBLINGS,* SO THEY *RULE* OVER *ME.*"

"THE ABILITY TO *RELEASE ME* WAS GIVEN TO MY BROTHER MISRAN ALONE.

"BUT THE *LONGER* I WAS *BOUND*, THE MORE HE *LIKED IT.*"

MY LADY, THERE MUST BE *ANOTHER WAY...*

I LOSE PATIENCE.

*DO IT NOW!!*

*AAAAUUUUGHH!*

POOR RAPHAEL. YOU JUST NEED SOMEONE TO HATE.

NO WONDER YOU CAME HERE.

DON'T WORRY. I CAN HELP YOU.

I AM GOING TO TELL YOU A SECRET.

ONE THAT I HAVEN'T TOLD ANYONE ELSE.

NOT MAZIKEEN.

NOT GABRIEL, NOR ELAINE, NOR OUR DEAR DEPARTED MICHAEL.

NOT EVEN MY BARTENDER.

I AM THE REASON OUR FATHER ABANDONED HIS THRONE AND FLED THIS WORLD.

THAT'S NOT WHAT HAPPENED! HE WASN'T FLEEING.

HE WAS. AND I WILL TELL YOU WHY.

YOU ***DON'T LIE.*** EVERYONE KNOWS IT.

YOU LET PEOPLE ***DECEIVE*** THEMSELVES, YOU ***TRICK*** THEM WITH YOUR WORDS, BUT YOU ***NEVER LIE.***

I'M NOT LYING.

"BEFORE I BOARDED THE ***NAGLFAR,*** OUR FATHER ***SPOKE*** TO ME.

"HE REMINDED ME HE HAD ***FORESEEN*** MY REBELLION. ***NUDGED*** IT ALONG.

"MY FALL WAS PART OF HIS ***PLAN.***

"BUT MY ***ABANDON-MENT*** OF MY ***DUTIES*** IN HELL...

"...THAT WAS JUST ***UNACCEPTABLE.***

"YOU SEE, HE HAD COME TO ME BEFORE."

**THE REALM IS MUCH CHANGED SINCE I BESTOWED IT UPON YOU.**

I HOPED ***NEVER*** TO SEE YOU AGAIN.

THIS IS MUCH SOONER THAN THAT.

**I TOLD YOU "NEVER" WAS *MORE* THAN I COULD PROMISE.**

A LITTLE MORE ***EFFORT*** MIGHT BE IN ***ORDER.***

THIS REALM IS A HEAVY BURDEN TO BEAR. YOU HAVE GUESSED THAT IT IS A NECESSARY PART OF MY PLAN.

THAT YOU ARE A NECESSARY PART OF MY PLAN. LET US KEEP THAT GUESS BETWEEN US.

A LIE?

A NECESSARY DECEPTION.

"MY TRUE REBELLION WAS *NOT* LEADING AN ARMY AGAINST *HEAVEN*. IT WAS HANDING OVER THE *KEY TO HELL* TO *MORPHEUS*."

ENOUGH OF YOUR CHILDISHNESS! **REPENT**, RETURN TO HELL, OR BE DESTROYED.

AND WHAT IF I TOLD MY BROTHERS JUST WHAT YOU *PROMISED* ME?

WHAT IF I TOLD THEM OF THE *GREAT DECEPTION*?

NO ONE BELIEVES THE DEVIL.

BUT HE DIDN'T *CALL MY BLUFF*, DID HE?

HE ABANDONED THE WORLD.

AND THEN I SUPPOSE *I* ABANDONED IT, TOO.

LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON.

SOMEONE'S COMING.

LET THEM. I AM *READY.*

WE HEARD SCREAMING.

AS YOU CAN SEE I AM PERFECTLY WELL.

YOU MADE PROMISES.

I AM GOING INTO BATTLE.

DON'T MAKE ME WARM UP BY KILLING YOU FIRST.

LITTLE SISTER, GET BACK ON YOUR THRONE BEFORE YOU REGRET IT.

I'M NOT REALLY ONE FOR REGRETS.

ANYONE ELSE?

NEWARK, NEW JERSEY.

LORIN HAMMON, COME OUT!

I WOULD SPEAK WITH YOU.

CHRIST ON A BICYCLE, ARE YOU OUT OF YOUR MIND?

EVERY-ONE CAN SEE YOU.

OKAY, I'M COMING DOWN.

NOTHING MAKES SENSE ANYMORE.

I WAS WRONG, WRONG ABOUT SO MUCH.

EVERYTHING THAT MATTERED.

WHAT MATTERS IS... UH...

I THINK THIS ONE REALLY SENDS THE RIGHT MESSAGE.

AS DO I, PRUFLAS.

AS DO I.

TO MARKET, TO MARKET, TO BUY A FAT PIG.

JOHNSON

LIVER! GANGRENOUS LIVER, COOKED TO A TURN!

BISHOP'S SPLEEN $1
CRISPY CHRISTIANS $1.50

OUR GLORIOUS QUEEN OF HELL 87
PRETENDER 13

*"We are each our own devil, and we make this world our hell."*
— Oscar Wilde

# Father Lucifer Part Three: PRODIGAL SONS

LUCIFER, COME FOR THE SPECTACLE?

YOU TURN UP IN THE MOST UNEXPECTED PLACES, MELEOS.

I MISLIKE IT.

BEFORE EVERYTHING ELSE, I AM AN ARTIST.

AND WHAT IS AN ARTIST WITHOUT INSPIRATION?

LESS TROUBLE.

ISN'T SHE MAGNIFICENT?

MAZIKEEN MORNINGSTAR, QUEEN OF HELL.

YES.

YOU CAN SEE HER.

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE? WHEN I BLIND SOMEONE, I EXPECT THEM TO **STAY** BLIND.

I MADE THEM.

AREN'T THEY ***LOVELY?***

IF YOU LIKE THEM WELL ENOUGH, I COULD MAKE YOU A PAIR OF YOUR VERY OWN.

HOW GENEROUS.

I BRING A MESSAGE. FROM ***HER.***

***LADY MAZIKEEN?***

***IZANAMI-NO-MIKOTO.*** SHE WISHES ME TO COMMUNICATE THAT SHE WAS SORRY TO MISS YOU ON YOUR LAST VISIT, BUT THAT YOU'LL ALWAYS BE WELCOME IN ***HELL.***

YOU'RE HER ERRAND BOY NOW? I THOUGHT BETTER OF YOU.

I AM A FALLEN ANGEL, LUCIFER. SHE IS ALLIED WITH US.

WHOSE SIDE ARE ***YOU*** ON THESE DAYS?

THERE IS A CRACK IN THE THRONE OF HEAVEN.

THROUGH IT, THE ANGELS OF THE SILVER CITY GAZE AT THE ***REMAINS*** OF THE PRESENCE IN ***ADORATION*** AND ***HORROR.***

A FOUR-FACED ***CHERUBIM*** GOES MAD.

MAYBE WE'RE ***GODS.*** MAYBE WE'RE ***ALL*** GODS!

ONE OF THE ***POWERS*** CANNOT STOP WEEPING.

HER ***TEARS*** FALL FROM THE SILVER CITY AND WHATEVER THEY STRIKE ***MOURNS*** ALONG WITH HER.

EVEN THE ***STONES*** WEEP.

SEVEN ANGELS ***FLY*** OUT INTO THE BEYOND TO ***OBSERVE*** THE THING MORE CLOSELY.

AUGH!

THE ***HOLY OBJECT*** SEEMS TO ***LIVE.***

TO ***SWELL*** ALONG WITH THE HEARTBEAT OF THE ***UNIVERSE.***

NOWHERE IN THEIR THEOLOGY IS THERE ANYTHING TO PREPARE THEM FOR ***THIS.***

I WAS ***WRONG*** TO BRING YOU HERE.

YOU MEAN BECAUSE IF YOU DIE, I'M GOING TO BE ***STUCK IN HELL*** AND THAT'LL ***SUCK?***

I'LL MAKE ASMODEUS ***PROMISE*** TO CARE FOR YOU.

OH, YOUR UNCLE WOULD ***TAKE CARE*** OF ME.

THERE ARE SOME THINGS I ***HAVEN'T TOLD*** YOU.

***ANOTHER*** SECRET?

NOT EXACTLY.

IT'S JUST THAT I'M ***NOT HUMAN,*** ROSEMARY. YOU KNOW THAT, RIGHT?

I KNOW.

AND I LOVE YOU ANYWAY, ***DUMBASS.***

"YOU KNOW WHEN I *FIRST DECIDED* I LIKED YOU?

"WE WERE IN THAT SHAKESPEARE SURVEY, REMEMBER? AND YOU WERE TRYING TO *CHEAT* OFF MY PAPER.

"DON'T DENY IT.

"AND THEN WHEN I CAUGHT YOU, DO YOU REMEMBER WHAT YOU SAID?

"'SOME *RISE* BY SIN AND SOME BY VIRTUE *FALL*,' FROM *MEASURE FOR MEASURE*.

I DECIDED A GUY WHO COULD *QUOTE* FROM SHAKESPEARE BUT *CHEATED ANYWAY* WAS SOMEONE I WANTED TO KNOW BETTER.

NOW IT'S YOUR JOB TO *CHEAT DEATH*, OKAY? AND IF THAT MEANS *BACKING DOWN* FROM THIS FIGHT, THAT'S OKAY.

IF THE *DEVIL* CAN WALK OUT OF THIS PLACE, SO CAN *YOU*.

IT'S NOT *TOO LATE*.

IT WAS *TOO LATE* THE *MOMENT* HE WAS *BORN*.

"LONG AGO ***LUCIFER*** CAME TO MY REALMS. HE WANTED A PAIR OF ***WINGS*** THAT HE'D ABANDONED--WINGS THAT HAD BEEN ***GIVEN*** TO US BY THE ANGEL ***REMIEL.***

"HE LURED MY ***SONS*** TO THEIR ***DEATHS.***

"HE TRICKED ***KAGUTSUCHI*** INTO DRAWING THE ***THREE-NAMED SWORD,*** A WOUND FROM WHICH--NO MATTER HOW ***SHALLOW***--MEANS ***DEATH.***

"WHILE SWINGING AT LUCIFER--

"--KAGUTSUCHI ***STRUCK*** HIS ***BROTHER,*** ***TSUKI-YOMI,*** WHO ***DIED.***

"KAGUTSUCHI HAD BEEN POISONED BY ***LUCIFER,*** SO HIS AIM WAS NOT TRUE.

"***HE*** DIED NEXT.

"***TAKEHIKO*** FIGHTS FOR ***THEM.***

"HE WAS ***BORN*** TO FIGHT FOR THEM.

SO ***YOU***...AND ***LUCIFER***...HOW DID THAT EVEN HAPPEN? DIDN'T HE KNOW YOU WERE HIS ***ENEMY?***

BE THEY GODS OR DEVILS...

...***ALL*** MEN ARE BUT FOOLS.

REMEMBER, WHEN MAZIKEEN LOOKS TO HIM, ***FOLLOW*** HER GAZE. THAT IS HOW YOU WILL ***FIND*** LUCIFER, EVEN IN THIS CROWD.

HOW CAN YOU BE ***SURE*** SHE WILL LOOK?

I ***NEEDLED*** HER ***PRIDE.***

I EVEN PROMISED HER A ***FORFEIT*** IF SHE WOULD JUST ***RESTRAIN*** HERSELF FROM ACKNOWLEDGING HIM.

THAT SOUNDS LIKE A GOOD DEAL.

IT IS AN ***EXCELLENT*** DEAL, WHICH IS WHY SHE WON'T TAKE IT. SHE'LL LOOK.

AND WHEN SHE DOES, YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO.

NOW, COME. LET MY SON MAKE THE REST OF HIS PREPARATIONS ***ALONE.***

YOU REALLY THINK HE CAN *WIN* AGAINST THE QUEEN OF HELL?

SHE'S *NOT THE ONE* HE'LL BE FIGHTING.

WELL, WELL.

IT'S BEEN FOREVER.

I DIDN'T THINK YOU WOULD COME.

AFTER SUCH A GRACIOUS WELCOME, HOW COULD I REFUSE?

DID I NOT TELL YOU THAT ALL THINGS COME FULL CIRCLE, PRINCE OF HELL?

A DIS-APPROVING FATHER, A REBELLIOUS SON.

ALL SO FAMILIAR, IS IT NOT?

I GUESS I CAN SEE A RESEMBLANCE.

YOU SHOULD KILL THE BOY *YOURSELF*, IZANAMI-NO-MIKOTO.

YOU'D *SAVE* BOTH OF US A LOT OF TIME.

JUST AS YOU WERE THE CAUSE OF YOUR FATHER'S *UNDOING*, LUCIFER, SO SHALL *YOUR SON* BE THE CAUSE OF *YOURS*.

YOU THINK AN OMINOUS TONE AND A HINT OF PROPHECY WILL GET UNDER MY SKIN?

I DON'T THINK YOU REMEMBER *MY FATHER* WELL AT ALL.

I AM SURPRISED YOU DON'T TAKE MAZIKEEN'S PLACE AS HER CHAMPION.

ISN'T THIS *YOUR* FIGHT, AFTER ALL?

TRY TO TAKE MAZIKEEN'S PLACE AND YOU'LL NEVER TAKE ANY-THING EVER AGAIN.

DEMONS, LILIM, ANGELS, FOOLS, TORTURED SOULS...TODAY WE DECIDE THE FATE OF HELL.

I STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY YOU WON'T JUST GO FOR THE FORFEIT.

I WILL RIP THE BOY'S HEART FROM HIS CHEST.

AND I WILL ***ENJOY*** IT.

OUCH.

I KNOW JUST HOW THAT KID'S GONNA FEEL.

ASMODEUS SAID TO DULL THE BLADE.

HIT IT AGAIN, WORMKNUCKLE! MAKE SURE IT'S AS DULL AS BEELZEBUB'S CONVERSATION.

OUR VERY OWN **MAZIKEEN MORNINGSTAR,** QUEEN OF HELL, LEADER OF THE LILIM, DEFENDS--

--AGAINST HER CHALLENGER, **TAKEHIKO-NO-MIKOTO**, PRINCE OF TWO HELLS.

SURRENDER OR DIE, CHILD.

ON SECOND THOUGHT, JUST DIE.

THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG WITH MY SWORD.

THAT BLOW SHOULD HAVE SLICED YOU IN HALF.

MAYBE YOU'RE NOT AS GOOD AT THIS AS YOU THOUGHT.

IF I CAN'T KILL YOU FAST, THEN KILLING YOU SLOW WILL HAVE TO DO.

NOTHING OF *HELL* CAN HARM ME.

"WHEN I WAS AN INFANT, MY MOTHER AND MY UNCLE BROUGHT ME HERE.

"I WAS IMMERSED IN EACH OF THE SACRED RIVERS: ***STYX, LETHE, ACHERON, PHLEGETHON*** AND ***COCYTUS.***

HELL RUNS THROUGH MY ***VEINS.***

THERE YOU ARE.

I DON'T WANT THERE TO BE ANY *CONFUSION.*

I NEED NO *FORFEIT.*

SO THAT'S *HIM.*

FATHER.

MAZIKEEN EXPECTED A TRICK FROM THE MOMENT SHE WAS CHALLENGED.

BUT THE NATURE OF A TRICK IS THAT EVEN WHEN YOU'RE EXPECTING ONE, YOU'RE STILL SURPRISED.

A CHIP OFF THE OLD BLOCK, WOULDN'T YOU SAY?

WHAT *IS* THAT THING?

TAKEHIKO?

OH SHIT.

IF HE BREAKS OFF THE FIGHT WITH MAZIKEEN, HE *LOSES* HELL.

HE AVENGES THE DEATH OF HIS BROTHERS.

FAHHHHCHUUURRR.

THE VOID.

SOMETHING IS HAPPENING.

HE IS COMING.

GLORY.

GLORY.

GLORY.

HOLY.

HOLY.

I AM A NEW GOD.
A GOD OF FIRE AND BRIMSTONE.
I SCORN FREE WILL.
AND I MEAN TO REMAKE THE WORLD IN MY IMAGE.

JOHNSON

# Father Lucifer Part Four: WORLD UNCHAINED

EVERYTHING *OLD* IS *NEW* AGAIN.

ISN'T THAT THE PROMISE OF *REBIRTH?*

AFTER A FLOOD, THE SOIL IS *READY* FOR NEW *SEEDS.*

AFTER A *FALL,* WE'RE ALL READY FOR A LITTLE *REINVENTION.*

EVEN GODS NEED *CHANGE* SOMETIMES.

*"Many deeds are enacted in God's name which fill the Devil's heart with envy."*
—Abraham Miller

BUT WHEN GODS CHANGE, THEY CANNOT SHIFT AS HUMANS DO, A LITTLE AT A TIME.

THEY MUST BE ***ALTERED*** ALL ***AT ONCE.***

THEY ***BURN OUT*** LIKE A STAR...

...AND ARE ***REIGNITED.***

IT HAS BEEN SAID THAT THE PRESENCE WAS A ***JEALOUS*** AND ***AVENGING*** GOD.

FULL OF WRATH.

IMAGINE IF THAT GOD CAME BACK...

...AND CAME BACK ***WRONG.***

APARTMENT OF JILL AND NOEMA PRESTO, NEW JERSEY.

THERE'S SOMETHING *WRONG* WITH THAT *STORM.*

WHAT ARE THOSE?

*BIRDS?*

THEY'RE TOO BIG.

"I THINK THEY'RE... *ANGELS.*"

DID THAT REALLY HAPPEN?

BECAUSE MY DAD WOULD KILL ME IF HE KNEW I'D *BLASPHEMED* LIKE THIS.

THAT'S QUITE A *EUPHEMISM.*

I'M NOT SAYING THAT I REGRET IT!

I MEAN, YOU DON'T REGRET IT... *DO* YOU?

NO.

MAYBE I OUGHT TO, BUT I...

RAPHAEL?

RAPHAEL!

FUCK.

YOU'RE JUST A LITTLE **MOTE** OF MY ENERGY.

A **SPARK** I COULD REACH OUT AND EXTINGUISH.

I AM NOT JUST SOME PIECE OF YOU. I AM **NOTHING** LIKE YOU!

*MEANWHILE, BACK IN HELL, THE BATTLE BETWEEN LUCIFER AND TAKEHIKO RAGES ON.*

YOU'RE RIGHT ABOUT THAT.

NOW **GO AWAY,** LITTLE SPARK, BEFORE I GET **ANGRY.**

**KHROOMPH**

**NOTHING** OF HELL CAN HARM ME. HELL RUNS IN MY **VEINS!**

YOU'RE NOT BEING HARMED.

YOU FIXED YOUR FACE.

I REMADE IT.

I'VE BECOME FOND OF BEING UNDERSTOOD WHEN I SPEAK.

YOU'VE ALWAYS BEEN BEAUTIFUL IN ALL YOUR ASPECTS.

DON'T FLATTER ME.

AAHNGKH!

I WOULDN'T ***PUT DOWN*** THAT WEAPON IF I WERE YOU.

I SERVED YOU *FAITHFULLY.*

BUT I AM YOUR SERVANT *NO MORE.*

MAZIKEEN?

I am not YOUR enemy.

THEN WHAT ARE YOU?

YOU LEFT ME WITH A **POWER** I BARELY UNDERSTOOD.

YOU LEFT ME IN THE **WORLD** YOU REMADE.

YOU LEFT ME!

I'm here now.

WHAT DO *THEY* WANT?

HE IS HERE.

GLORY.

GLORY.

GLORY.

GLORY.

HOLY.

HOLY.

HOL--

no!

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

TAKE US TO YOUR REALM. *NOW.*

FORGET TAKEHIKO. YOU BETRAYED US, IZANAMI.

BUT DON'T WORRY. THERE'S A WAY TO MAKE THINGS RIGHT.

GET US OUT OF HERE OR YOU *DIE* ALONG WITH US.

I WILL BE HONORED TO HAVE YOU AS GUESTS IN THE HOUSE OF WINDOWLESS ROOMS.

BE WELCOME.

SERVANTS WILL TAKE YOU TO CHAMBERS WHERE YOU CAN REFRESH YOURSELVES.

YOU WILL, OF COURSE, GIVE UP YOUR WEAPONS FOR THE DURATION OF YOUR STAY.

TO DO OTHERWISE WOULD BE A ***GRAVE*** OFFENSE.

THE PRESENCE WON'T BE ABLE TO REACH US HERE.

WE ARE REFUGEEZZZ. WE THROW OURZZZELVEZZZ ON YOUR MMMERZZZY.

STAY AS LONG AS YOU LIKE.

JUST BE SURE TO MIND YOUR MANNERS.

you are NO ONE'S servant, you said so yourself.

do not LET HIM do this to you.

not you.

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

MY FIRST CHILDREN, YOU ARE ALSO FIRST TO SEE THE GLORY OF MY RETURN.

FLOUNDER NO LONGER IN CONFUSION AND DISMAY.

NO LONGER WILL YOU HAVE TO SEPARATE RIGHT FROM WRONG.

THERE WILL ONLY BE ONE PATH NOW.

THE PATH OF RIGHTEOUS-NESS.

FREE WILL. THAT BASTARD IS TAKING AWAY OUR FREE WILL.

GET OUT OF MY HEAD!

I WAS ***BEYOND*** YOUR MERCY BEFORE. NOW I AM BEYOND YOUR REACH.

I WON'T LET YOU ***USE*** ME AGAIN!

ARE YOU OKAY?

I AM.

I AM ***NOW.***

WHY ISN'T *HE* DEAD?

I UNDER-ESTIMATED YOUR INCOMPETENCE.

THAT'S *NOT* FUNNY.

YOU PLAYED INTO HIS HAND.

SO DID I.

THERE WAS ALWAYS AN ARCHITECT TO THIS LITTLE PLAY-- SOMEONE TO GIVE YOU THE *SWORD* AND A LITTLE SHOVE.

HOW COULD WE HAVE SUSPECTED ANYONE BUT DEAR OLD *DAD*?

BUT HE DOESN'T QUITE SEEM HIMSELF, DOES HE?

*ENOUGH.*

WE NEED ACTION.

I HAVE THE MORNINGSTAR POWER, BUT DON'T KNOW ITS LIMITS YET.

TELL ME WHAT TO DO. TELL ME HOW TO *STOP* HIM.

WE'RE GOING ON A JOURNEY. THERE'S SOMEONE WE NEED TO SPEAK WITH.

WHAT ABOUT THE DEMONS? THE LILIM?

HOPEFULLY HE WON'T BREAK TOO MANY OF HIS TOYS BEFORE WE GET BACK.

WHERE ARE WE GOING?

WE?

THAT'S RIGHT. I ACCOMPANY MY QUEEN, TO DEFEND HER AGAINST HER ENEMIES, NO MATTER WHO OR ***WHAT*** THEY ARE.

HER KNIGHT ERRANT. HOW SWEET.

WE'RE GOING TO FIND ***ELAINE.***

WHAT ARE THOSE?

I MADE MYSELF A PAIR OF WINGS.

IT SEEMS AS THOUGH I WILL NEED THEM.

THEY'RE... PRETTY?

YOU CAN'T JUST MEAN TO LEAVE HIM LIKE THAT.

HE'S YOUR SON.

A SWORD THROUGH THE STOMACH IS NOTHING COMPARED TO WHAT OUR FATHER DID TO US.

IF HE WANTS TO BE IN THIS FAMILY, HE BETTER TOUGHEN UP.

TAKE GOOD CARE OF HIM, LITTLE GHOST.

ONE...TWO...
THREE...

AUUUGH!

I KILLED YOU.

AREN'T YOU ANGRY?

I'M NOT HAPPY. BUT I'M NOT EXACTLY **SURPRISED** EITHER.

THAT'S HOW THIS KIND OF STORY GOES.

WHERE ARE WE GOING?

TO GET YOU WHAT YOU WANTED.

EVERYONE'S TOO **BUSY** TO STOP US.

I AM **NOT** GOING TO HAVE DIED FOR NOTHING.

I DON'T KNOW IF I CAN MAKE IT...

YOU HAVE TO.

OTHERWISE, I **DID** DIE FOR NOTHING.

YOU WANTED TO SIT ON THE THRONE OF HELL.

AND HERE YOU ARE.

IN THE THRONE ROOM OF HEAVEN.

EVERYTHING WILL BE AS IT WAS.

EVERYTHING WILL BE AS IT SHOULD BE.

I WILL **DROWN** THE WORLD AND THEN I WILL REMAKE IT WITH **FIRE.**

AND WHEN EVERY TRACE OF WHAT **WAS** BURNS AWAY, WE WILL **START AGAIN** AS WE DID BEFORE.

WITH MICHAEL DEMIURGOS.

SPARK OF LIFE.

LOOKS LIKE THE OLD HOMESTEAD IS GETTING A MAKEOVER, TOO.

WHERE ARE WE?

BEYOND HIS CREATION.

IN MINE.

YOU MADE ALL THIS?

HONESTLY, SOMETIMES YOU'RE JUST LIKE OUR FATHER.

DO YOU LIKE IT?

I BET YOU WONDERED WHO WAS TELLING YOU THIS STORY...

...SURPRISE, IT'S *ME.*

HI, MAZIKEEN.

WE'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU.

THIS WHOLE OMNISCIENCE THING IS WEIRD, RIGHT?

# OMNISCIENT NARRATION

## Father Lucifer Part Five

OUR WHOLE WORLD IS *FUCKED.*

BUT THE SKY HERE IS VERY *PRETTY.*

SO, *LUCIFER'S SON*--IS HE CUTE?

IS HE A LOT LIKE ELAINE?

UH, LAST TIME I SAW HIM HE HAD A *SWORD* IN HIS *GUT,* SO NO--NO TO ALL OF THAT.

LOTS OF KIDS DREAM ABOUT BEING PRINCESSES OR PRESIDENTS.

SO, HOW LONG ARE YOU STAYING?

BUT FEW *DREAM* OF BEING *GODS.*

*"Angels are bright still, though the brightest fell." —Shakespeare*

AND THE PEOPLE WHO DO DREAM OF BEING GODS AREN'T USUALLY THE KIND OF PEOPLE YOU WANT TO BE STUCK WORSHIPPING.

WE ***KNEW*** THIS DAY WAS COMING. DEMONS AND ***DEVILS*** WALK AMONG US.

THEY'VE POSSESSED MEDJINE.

WE MUST PROVE OURSELVES ***WORTHY*** OF SALVATION.

I'VE TRIED TO TALK TO OTHER GODS. THEY CAN BE KIND OF UNFRIENDLY.

HI.

OR WEIRD.

SO I'VE BEEN MUDDLING ALONG ON MY OWN SINCE LUCIFER LEFT.

TRYING TO BE A ***NEW*** KIND OF GOD.

NO COMMANDMENTS.

NO SACRIFICES.

NO FIRES. NO FLOODS.

JUST A LOT OF HAND-WRINGING.

ALSO, I'M ***OMNISCIENT.***

SO ALL THAT STUFF YOU PEOPLE SAY YOU DON'T WANT TO KNOW?

WELL, ***I*** KNOW IT.

AND I'M ***OMNI-PRESENT.***

WHICH IS SUPER-DISTRACTING, LET ME TELL YOU.

NOT TO MENTION BEING OMNIPOTENT.

WHICH TERRIFIES ME AND SHOULD TERRIFY ***YOU,*** TOO, IF YOU'VE GOT ANY SENSE.

WHAT I'M ***NOT,*** THOUGH, IS SURE OF WHAT I'M SUPPOSED TO DO WITH ALL THIS POWER.

ABANDONED BUILDING, NEW JERSEY.

HAVE A DRINK. HAVE A SMOKE.

IT'S THE ***END*** OF THE WORLD AS WE KNOW IT.

AND I WANT TO FEEL ***FINE.***

I JUST WISH IT WOULD STOP RAINING.

YOU KNOW WHAT CORPSES DO IN WATER? THEY ***BLOAT UP*** LIKE BALLOONS.

THAT'S WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN TO US.

WE ALL BLOAT AND THERE'LL BE ONE LAST BIG PARTY BEFORE WE BURST.

CHEERY.

MAYBE A BIG CRUISE BOAT WILL GO BY WITH ALL THE ANIMALS LINED UP TWO-BY-TWO TO APPRECIATE THE SIGHT.

BUT IT'LL PROBABLY BE ONE OF THOSE BOATS WITH THE NOROVIRUS.

YOU WOULD THINK THE WORLD WOULD HAVE CHANGED WHEN ANGELS AND DEVILS STARTED FLYING THROUGH THE SKIES, ***MURDERING*** WHOMEVER FATE CHOSE.

HEY, WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

THE STORE. I'LL BE BACK.

AND IT DID. KIND OF.

THE **NASDAQ** TOOK A DIVE. ORGANIZED RELIGION GOT A LOT MORE POPULAR. A BUNCH OF FLIGHTS GOT CANCELLED. MORE GOT DELAYED.

THE **MILITARY** WAS DEPLOYED.

PLENTY OF SOLDIERS IMMEDIATELY DESERTED.

THE END IS NIGH! SO FUCKIN NIGH.

QUIOR

GIVE ME FIVE DOLLARS' WORTH OF MINUTES FOR MY PHONE.

AND A PACK OF TWIZZLERS.

BUT PEOPLE NEED PAYCHECKS. PEOPLE NEED MONEY FOR CIGARETTES, MILK, BREAD, RAZOR BLADES, RENT.

KIDS HAVE TO GET DROPPED OFF AT DAY CARE.

HI, YEAH, IS THE **PROPHET** THERE? YEAH, MR. HAMMON.

I'LL HOLD.

HARDWARE STORES HAVE TO SUPPLY ALL THOSE NEW END-OF-DAYS CULTS WITH FRESH LIGHTER FLUID AND AXES.

MALLS NEED TO BE OPEN BECAUSE IF WATER IS RISING AND DEMONS ARE SAVAGING PEOPLE AND WE'RE ALL GOING TO DIE, WHY NOT GET THAT LIPSTICK FROM SEPHORA YOU REALLY WANT?

HIS SON, **LORIN.** YEAH, I KNOW. I'M EXCOM-MUNICATED.

JUST PUT HIM ON THE PHONE.

DAD? YEAH, IT'S ME.

I KNOW I'M A SINNER AND ALL THAT.

BUT I WANTED TO SAY GOOD-BYE TO YOU AND MOM.

SINCE I **WON'T** BE SEEING YOU IN HEAVEN.

SO, DID YOU EVER MISS US, OUT THERE IN THE UNIVERSE?

I MISSED MAKING TROUBLE.

YOU KNOW WHAT WOULD BE A RADICAL AND TRANSGRESSIVE ACT? SOMEONE IN THIS FAMILY ADMITTING THEY HAVE ***FEELINGS!***

WHEN YOU LEFT HELL, YOU WANTED TO LIE AROUND ON BEACHES AND APPRECIATE SUNSETS.

***THAT*** WAS DEFIANCE!

I MISSED ***YOU.*** WE ALL MISSED YOU, EVEN IF WE HATE TO ADMIT IT. THE WHOLE WORLD MISSED YOU.

SOME OF US MISSED YOU A ***LOT.***

SO IF YOU'RE GOING TO LEAVE, ***GO.*** DON'T JUST HANG AROUND HERE GETTING EVERY-ONE'S HOPES UP.

ARE YOU KICKING ME OUT OF YOUR CREATION?

YOU KNOW THAT'S NOT WHAT I'M SAYING.

YOU HAVE A BIGGER PROBLEM THAN MY FICKLE SELF.

THAT MONSTROUS ***THING*** SQUATTING IN THE SILVER CITY, CALLING ITSELF YOUR GRANDFATHER.

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT IT?

*NOTHING.*

THERE'S A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN NOT INTERFERING IN MORTAL CONCERNS AND LETTING THE WORLD BE ***DESTROYED*** BY A RIVAL GOD.

I MADE A PROMISE TO STAY OUT OF THINGS.

EVEN THINGS I DON'T LIKE. EVEN THINGS I ***HATE.***

SO YOU'RE GOING TO LET THE WORLD DROWN AND BURN JUST SO YOU CAN PROVE A POINT?

I ADMIT, I DIDN'T THINK YOU HAD IT IN YOU.

BUT IN THAT CASE...

NOEMA PRESTO.

GIVE HER BACK WHAT YOU ***COOK***. THE PART OF HER THAT WAS MEANT TO BE BASANOS.

AND HIDE IT FROM THE PRESENCE.

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?

WHAT YOU WON'T. INTERFERE.

BUT WHAT ABOUT NOEMA? WHAT YOU'RE ASKING ME TO DO IS CRUEL.

ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, SHE'S DOOMED.

THE ONLY DIFFERENCE IS WHETHER OR NOT YOU'RE WILLING TO GET YOUR HANDS DIRTY.

IF YOU CAN GET HER TO ACCEPT THE POWER, IT'S HERS.

I THOUGHT YOU'D BE A DIFFERENT SORT OF GOD, ELAINE.

I GUESS YOU SHOULD HAVE STUCK AROUND AND SHOWED ME WHAT THAT LOOKED LIKE.

AND IF I'M CONTENT TO **STAY**, AT LEAST FOR NOW?

THEN I HAVE SOMETHING FOR YOU, BESIDES THE COIN.

THINK OF IT AS A **WELCOME HOME** PRESENT.

AUUUUUGH!

IN THE SILVER CITY, THE ANGELS WORK LIKE CLOCKWORK AUTOMATA.

PERFECT SYNCHRONICITY.

WHEN THIS IS OVER, WE WILL FIGHT AND I WILL KILL YOU IF I CAN.

YES.

AS IS RIGHT AND GOOD.

AND WHEN THE WORLD IS DESTROYED, MICHAEL, WE WILL MAKE IT OVER, CLEAN AND NEW.

MEDJINE?

YOU *TOLD* THEM ABOUT ME?

I HAD TO! I DIDN'T KNOW WHEN WE WERE COMING BACK!

WHY DON'T YOU COME OUT OF THERE AND WE CAN TALK IN THE LIVING ROOM?

WHAT DO YOU *MEAN,* COMING BACK? COMING BACK FROM WHERE?

WE'RE GOING UPSTATE FOR A WHILE, TO HIGHER GROUND UNTIL THIS WEIRD WEATHER CLEARS UP.

WE'VE GOT A FRIEND WHO'S A PRETTY SERIOUS PREPPER.

LEANDRE EXPLAINED SOME OF WHAT HAPPENED WITH YOUR--WITH THE FAMILY WHO *ADOPTED* YOU. I TALKED TO THEM AND--

YOU CALLED THEM?

DO THEY *KNOW* WHERE I AM?

ARE THEY *COMING* TO GET ME?

I TOLD THEM YOU WERE SAFE. THEY WERE WORRIED, MEDJINE.

I'M *NOT* GOING BACK THERE.

WITH EVERYTHING GOING ON, THEY HAVE THE *RIGHT* TO KNOW YOU'RE OKAY.

WE WANT YOU TO COME UPSTATE WITH US.

DON'T WORRY ABOUT *AFTER* THAT.

WE'LL KEEP YOU SAFE.

I'LL FIND YOU, LEANDRE.

DON'T GO.

I LOVE YOU.

*WAIT!*

YOU CAN TRUST US!

I *DON'T.*

NOBODY STAYS ANYWHERE *FOREVER.*

MAYBE NO ONE'S SUPPOSED TO.

*MEDJINE!*

YOUR END HAS COME, HUMANS.

YOUR DOMINION IS OVER.

BUT GLORY IN KNOWING THAT YOUR DEATH MAKES WAY FOR A BETTER WORLD.

GLÓRIA IN EXCÉLSIS **DEO** ET IN TERRA FATUM HOMINIBUS.

HELL.

YOU'RE IMMORTAL.

YOU'RE GOING TO BE FINE.

WHEN I WAS A LITTLE BOY, MY SISTER AMATERASU TOOK ME HUNTING.

"KU WA TANOSHIMI NO TANE," SHE TOLD ME.

I THOUGHT IT WAS A RIDDLE.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

PAIN IS THE SEED OF PLEASURE.

I'M STILL NOT SURE I AGREE.

UNLESS YOU'VE COME TO KILL ME, LEAVE US ALONE.

YOUR GRANDFATHER WANTS YOU TO JOIN HIM, TAKEHIKO.

HE HAS A PLACE FOR YOU IN HIS DIVINE PLAN.

HE WILL MAKE YOU *WHOLE* AGAIN.

HE WILL PUT YOU AT HIS LEFT HAND.

*FORSAKE* THE THRONE.

FORSAKE *ALL ELSE.*

AND *JOIN* HIM.

OR FORSAKE NOTHING AND *SUFFER.*

UNTIL YOU ARE LIKE THE GHOST BESIDE YOU.

I WAS CREATED FOR VENGEANCE.

THAT'S ALL I WANT. IF HE CAN'T GIVE ME *THAT,* THEN HE CAN GIVE ME NOTHING.

THAT BARGAIN IS ACCEPTABLE.

WAIT, WHAT ABOUT *ME?*

I DIDN'T AGREE TO THIS!

*ROSEMARY!*

THAT LITTLE SMUDGE? *SHE* HAS NO PLACE IN HEAVEN.

"SO, THIS IS HOW I FIGURE IT WENT. ONCE UPON A TIME, THERE WAS A DAD WITH A LOT OF SONS.

"THE DAD WAS VERY STRICT AND THE SONS WERE VERY GOOD.

"BUT THEN LUCIFER DYED HIS HAIR AND GOT INTO MUSIC AND PARTYING."

FREE WILL 4EVA5!

GO TO YOUR ROOM!

HE USED TO BE SO INTO SPORTS.

HE'S SUCH A JERK NOW.

SLAM!

"SO HE DECIDED TO RUN AWAY."

YOU JUST DON'T GET ME!

NO ONE GETS ME!

"SO HE AND ALL HIS FRIENDS MADE THEIR OWN PLACE."

KEEP OUT

WE NEED A SECRET PASSWORD.

"AND THEN *YOU* SHOWED UP, MAZIKEEN!"

HEY, BOYS.

IT WAS MOST ASSUREDLY NOTHING LIKE THAT.

YOU LEFT OUT A WHOLE *WAR* IN HEAVEN.

I THINK OF IT MORE LIKE A DANCE BATTLE.

*AUUUUUGH!*

WHAT IS SHE DOING?

PROBABLY TRYING TO KILL HIM.

HE COULD ANNOY A *STONE* INTO TRYING TO KILL HIM.

WHAT... WAS THAT?

YOU ARE LUCIFER ***MORNINGSTAR*** ONCE MORE, WITH ALL YOUR POWERS RETURNED TO YOU.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO THANK ME.

WHAT MAKES YOU THINK I WANT WHAT I ***GAVE AWAY?***

GIVE THEM AWAY AGAIN, THEN.

AFTER YOUR CONFRONTATION WITH THE PRESENCE.

WOW, SHE REALLY DID A NUMBER ON YOU.

TIME FOR US TO GO.

ARE YOU GOING WITH HIM?

YOU DON'T HAVE TO.

I HAVE TO.

AND SO THEY WERE RETURNED TO THE WORLD.

WHEN I SAID I WAS OMNISCIENT, THAT WASN'T ENTIRELY TRUE. THERE ARE THINGS I CANNOT KNOW.

I CANNOT KNOW WHAT GOES ON IN THE HEARTS OF OTHER GODS.

I CANNOT KNOW WHAT'S IN THEIR HEADS EITHER.

I ASSUME YOU HAVE A PLAN.

AND THAT YOU WON'T TELL US MORE THAN HALF OF IT.

MEDJINE WONDERS IF SHE MADE A MISTAKE, RUNNING AGAIN.

SHE MISSES LEANDRE ALREADY. SHE'S GOING TO MISS FALLING ASLEEP TO THE SOUND OF HIS EVEN BREATHS.

SHE IS GOING TO MISS HIS MOMS, WHO WEREN'T SCARY.

ESPECIALLY SINCE THE WORLD SEEMS TO HAVE GOTTEN A WHOLE LOT SCARIER OVERNIGHT.

HI, IS THIS LORIN?

I DON'T KNOW IF YOU REMEMBER ME. WE WERE ON A WEIRD BUS RIDE TOGETHER?

I'M IN TROUBLE.

MEDJINE REMINDS HERSELF THAT SHE CARRIED AZAZEL IN HER BAG. SHE MET THE DEVIL. SHE'S SEEN WORSE THAN THIS.

BEGONE BEFORE THE LORD'S VENGEANCE FALLS UPON YOU.

MY DAD USED TO SAY STUFF LIKE THAT ALL THE TIME.
THAT'S WHY YOU CALLED ME.
THAT WAS CRAZY. YOU'RE CRAZY.
I HAVE A PLACE TO STAY. IT ISN'T MUCH, BUT IT'S SOMETHING.
HEY, I'M SORRY THINGS DIDN'T WORK OUT WITH YOUR BROTHER.
THANKS.
AND THANKS FOR COMING.
YOU REMEMBER WHAT I SAID ABOUT BIRDS OF A FEATHER.
WE FLOCK TOGETHER.
RUN!
YOU MEDJINE?

YEAH, I'M MEDJINE.

GOOD, COME WITH ME.

IT'S ARMORED.

WHO DO YOU KNOW WITH A LIMO?

NO ONE.

NOEMA!

I WENT BY YOUR APART-MENT, BUT NO ONE WAS THERE.

I TOLD MY MOM WE COULDN'T LEAVE WITHOUT YOU.

GET IN.

WHERE ARE WE GOING?

I HAVE A SAFE HOUSE.

THERE'S ENOUGH FOOD AND WATER FOR A YEAR, AT LEAST.

HI, NOEMA.
FEEL LIKE SAVING THE WORLD?

JOHNSON

ONCE UPON A TIME, THERE WAS A ***MAGICIAN.***

PICK A CARD, ANY CARD.

THE ***CARDS*** CAME TO ***LIFE.***

THE ***BASANOS.***

THEY GOT ***TWINS*** ON HER.

CHILDREN SHE ***HATED.*** SHE ***DESTROYED*** ONE OF THEM.

Mother...

...please...

LET THE LITTLE FUCKER ***BLEED.***

# ENDGAME
## Father Lucifer Part Six

THE OTHER SHE ***CANNOT IMAGINE*** HER LIFE ***WITHOUT.***

*"When you strike at a king, you must kill him."*
—Ralph Waldo Emerson

I'VE COME TO GIVE YOUR DAUGHTER THE POWERS THAT WERE HER BIRTHRIGHT.

WHO IS THAT GUY, MS. PRESTO? YOU WANT ME TO SHOOT HIM?

THAT'S THE DEVIL.

NO.

THERE'S NO WAY ON EARTH YOU'RE SADDLING HER WITH THAT.

IT WAS A GIFT THAT SHE DIDN'T HAVE TO CONTEND WITH THE BASANOS AND THEIR POWERS.

MOM?

IT'S HER CHOICE, ISN'T IT?

SHE'S A KID.

AND YOU'RE A BASTARD, COMING HERE LIKE THIS.

THE WORLD WAS BETTER WITHOUT YOU IN IT!

DOES NOEMA EVEN KNOW WHAT SHE IS?

WHAT DID YOU TELL HER? THAT HER FATHER WAS SOME--

SHUT UP.

AND WHAT ABOUT THAT BROTHER OF HERS?

COME TALK TO ME FOR A MINUTE, KIDDO.

SO, FOUND ANY MORE BOTTLES WITH DEMONS IN THEM?

NO.

TOO BAD.

THAT GUY OUT THERE, HE'S A REAL ***JACKASS.***

BUT HE'S NOT ***LYING,*** IS HE? ***YOU'RE*** THE ONE WHO'S LYING.

I WOULD HAVE ***TOLD YOU*** WHEN YOU WERE ***OLDER.***

I DON'T BELIEVE YOU.

***NO!*** YOU DON'T EVEN ***KNOW*** IF YOU'LL STILL BE ***YOU!***

THEY SAY ***CURIOSITY*** KILLED THE ***CAT.***

NOBODY SEEMS TO ***REMEMBER*** THE NEXT LINE.

WAIT, YOU ***CAN'T TRUST HIM!***

"CURIOSITY KILLED THE CAT, BUT SATISFACTION BROUGHT HIM BACK."

HI, I'M NOEMA PRESTO. WHERE AM I?

IS SOMEONE THERE?

DAUGHTER.

DAUGHTER.

DAUGHTER.

AWAKEN.

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

WHAT'S WRONG?

SHE LIVED FOR SO LONG WITHOUT POWER.

PERHAPS SHE CANNOT BEAR IT.

THE COIN! IF SHE DROPS IT, MAYBE THIS WILL STOP!

I WOULDN'T TOUCH THAT IF I WERE YOU.

AAAAAAGH!

NOEMA, WHAT ARE THEY?

THERE WERE SUPPOSED TO BE TWO OF THEM. TWINS.

MOTHERLESS CHILD, YOU WILL BE OURS, TOO.

DAUGHTER.

DAUGHTER.

WE SEE THE FUTURE.

WE REMEMBER THE PAST.

AH, GOOD.

OUTSIDE THE SILVER CITY.

THE LAST TIME WE DID THIS, WE HAD AN ARMY.

AND WHAT A LOT OF TROUBLE THEY TURNED OUT TO BE.

THIS TIME WE HAVE FATE.

OPENING THE DOOR TO THE BASANOS WORRIES ME.

THEY ARE DANGEROUS.

I MISLIKE IT, TOO.

BUT A CHILD IS NOT ITS FATHER. OR SO I KEEP TELLING MYSELF.

EVERYTHING ABOUT THIS PLAN SUCKS.

MICHAEL DEMIURGOS?

BUT YOU'RE DEAD.

ANYONE HOME IN THAT HEAD OF YOURS?

BLINK TWICE IF YOU CAN HEAR ME.

GO.

I WILL BE YOUR SOLDIER ONE LAST TIME.

WE SEE THE FUTURE. THAT'S THE PROBLEM WITH DETERMINISM, IT'S ALL SPELLED OUT.

WE GIVE THE GIFT OF ANTICIPATING EVERY BLOW.

HOW LONG CAN WE KEEP THIS UP?

I DON'T KNOW, BUT IT'S FUN WHILE IT LASTS.

I KNEW you would come here.

It was PREORDAINED.

YOU'RE JOKING, RIGHT?

IT'S NOT FORESIGHT IF YOU *CAUSE* IT TO HAPPEN.

I don't need you any-more.

I have ABSORBED the piece of YOU stuck in Gabriel's blade.

I have learned every-thing I needed to know.

HAVE YOU, NOW?

THEN MAKE A JOKE.

What?

GO ON. MAKE ME LAUGH.

YOU CAN'T BE THE *DEVIL* IF YOU AREN'T A BIT *CHEEKY*.

You misunderstand me.

I have taken from you the part I need. Nothing more. I have left the dross of your CHILDISHNESS, your PREENING, your BRAGGADOCIO behind.

I THINK YOU AND I HAVE VERY DIFFERENT IDEAS ABOUT WHICH PARTS OF ME ARE THE *GOOD* PARTS.

THIS IS THE THIRD TIME YOU'VE TRIED TO DESTROY THE WORLD.

SOMEONE SHOULD REALLY CONGRATULATE ME ON HOW RIGHT I WAS ABOUT YOU.

You've come to fight me, so shall we FIGHT, Morningstar?

BUT I HAVEN'T COME TO FIGHT.

I'VE COME TO RUIN YOU.

No one can ever say you weren't ambitious.

HUBRIS, they call it.

I will not miss you. You were a good idea, messily rendered. A FIRST DRAFT.

I will make you again and make you better. Just as I have REMADE MYSELF.

I will remake EVERY-THING.

ONCE, YOU BRANDED EVERYTHING WITH YOUR NAME: YAHWEH. AND WHEN YOU WENT AWAY, YOU TOOK YOUR NAME WITH YOU.

THIS IS THE WORLD YOU GAVE UP. THIS ONE BELONGS TO SOMEONE ELSE NOW.

This WORLD is MINE. YOU are mine. I made it and I MADE YOU.

NOT EVERYTHING YOU MAKE BELONGS TO YOU.

Welcome back to the GREAT GAME.

I knew you would miss it.

You got a taste and I knew you wouldn't be able to stop playing.

WHAT IS THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?

I mean MAKING WORLDS.

I mean GUIDING them, SHAPING them, DESTROYING them.

Isn't that what I always WANTED for you and for Michael?

Elaine's SKILLED, but new.

I was sure you couldn't resist once you'd begun.

THAT'S WHERE YOU'RE WRONG.

I AM HERE TO GIVE YOU A *MESSAGE*.

*ELAINE* IS HOLDING THIS WORLD TOGETHER, NOT YOU.

DON'T *FORCE* HER *HAND*.

KEEP YOUR ANGEL ARMY, KEEP MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS BRAINWASHED.

BUT LEAVE THE WORLD AS IT IS. WHATEVER PLAGUES OR STORMS YOU'VE PLANNED, PULL THEM BACK.

AND WE CAN ALL PRETEND YOU STILL HAVE THE POWER YOU'VE FORSAKEN.

And why should I BELIEVE you? The great Lucifer, HUMBLED into being a MESSENGER?

I think not.

EXPLAIN HOW MAZIKEEN AND GABRIEL ARE HOLDING THE ANGELS AT BAY. SOMEONE HAS GIVEN THEM THE GIFT OF KNOWING WHERE EACH BLOW WILL LAND BEFORE IT FALLS.

WHO MIGHT HAVE DONE THAT?

I HAVE MANY TALENTS, BUT THAT IS NOT ONE OF THEM.

Go.

Go and tell your Elaine that I will do as she asks FOR NOW, but ONLY for now.

This world is mine to shape. And I will remake it as I will.

WHATEVER YOU ARE, YOU MAY HAVE SOME OF *HIM* IN YOU.

PERHAPS YOU STOLE HIS POWER AS YOU STOLE MINE.

BUT YOU ARE *NOT* MY FATHER.

WHAT HAPPENED?

THERE WERE THREE BLOWS AT ONCE. EVEN KNOWING THEY WERE *COMING* WASN'T ENOUGH.

EX LUX

YOU ARE IN *SO* MUCH TROUBLE.

I TOLD YOU I WASN'T GOING TO INTERFERE, AND NOW THE PRESENCE THINKS I THREATENED HIM!

I SAID I WAS BRINGING HIM A MESSAGE.

I NEVER SPECIFIED WHO THAT MESSAGE WAS FROM.

BESIDES, WE WON.

YOU DRAGGED ME INTO THIS FIGHT.

YOU MAY COME TO REGRET IT.

I'D SAY YOU DON'T WANT TO GET ON MY BAD SIDE.

BUT I'M ALL BAD SIDE.

LUCIFER KNOWS THAT SETTING ***ME*** AND THE ***PRESENCE*** AGAINST ONE ANOTHER IS NOT A PERMANENT SOLUTION.

MAZIKEEN?

YOU HEARD ALL THAT, DIDN'T YOU?

IT WON'T HOLD FOR LONG.

COME HERE.

NOEMA!

PLEASE TELL ME THAT YOU'RE STILL *YOU.*

THAT MY KIDDO IS STILL IN THERE.

I AM *MORE* AND *LESS* THAN I WAS BEFORE.

BUT I AM STILL NOEMA PRESTO.

AND YOU ARE STILL MY *WEIRDO MOM.*

AND MEDJINE. YOU *SAVED* MY DAUGHTER.

IF YOU WANTED TO STAY WITH US--

NO, I AM GOING TO MY BROTHER.

I HAVE THE POWER TO PROTECT BOTH OF US.

GABRIEL *FELL*, AND THEN *FELL EVEN FURTHER* THAN THAT.

WOOD

BUT LATELY HE'S BEEN FEELING SOMETHING NEW.

IT'S NOT THE *GLORY* OF THE *SILVER CITY...*

K-Town

...BUT IT'S SOMETHING.

LOS ANGELES, CITY OF REINVENTION.

HE CAN SEE WHY LUCIFER CAME HERE.

AND RIGHT NOW, IT FEELS LIKE A *BLESSING.*

YOU PROBABLY DON'T REMEMBER ME, BUT I NEED YOUR HELP.

IT WASN'T EASY TO FIND YOU, BUT HERE'S THE THING: I NEED YOUR HELP TO SAVE ONE OF YOUR BROTHERS.

I CAN *PAY.*

OKAY, I CAN'T PAY *MUCH.*

IF YOU KNOW WHO I AM, THEN TELL ME WHO THIS BROTHER IS AND WHY YOU WANT TO SAVE HIM.

YOU'RE JUST SOME KID.

RAPHAEL IS MY *BOYFRIEND.*

OKAY, WE DIDN'T *EXACTLY* DEFINE OUR RELATION-SHIP...

FINE.

I'LL TAKE THE CASE.

SO YOU'RE GOING BACK TO RULE HELL?

AND GIVE YOUR SON THE *BOOT.*

AH YES, *MY SON.*

I SUPPOSE I WILL HAVE TO DEAL WITH THAT EVENTUALLY.

BUT FOR NOW, *STAY* FOR A DRINK.

ALL RIGHT.

JUST *ONE.*

OLD NICK

JUST ONE MORE DRINK.

SO ARE YOU THINKING WHAT I'M THINKING?

THAT WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO KILL GOD?

YOU READ MY MIND.

The End

*"If epic poetry and noir mystery moved to L.A. and had a baby, it would be LUCIFER. Missing it would be a sin!"*
—Jody Houser, writer of MOTHER PANIC and *Orphan Black*

# DADDY ISSUES

God is dead—and the Devil has cracked the case.

After being wrongfully accused of deicide by his angelic brethren, the erstwhile Prince of Hell undertook an epic quest through the cosmos to clear his name. Now he wants nothing more than to retire to his Los Angeles club, Ex Lux, and drown the world's sorrows one drink at a time.

But nature and the supernatural alike both abhor a vacuum. With the throne of Heaven still vacant, archangels are turning on each other in an effort to seize their absent Father's crown. And since the Lightbringer has no desire to revisit his former kingdom, a vicious power struggle has erupted in the infernal realm, as well.

Caught between chaos above and below, Earth has never been more vulnerable. In order to keep his terrestrial retreat safe from collateral damage, Lucifer must reluctantly rejoin the fight for control over Creation. But as the battle rages, the aftershocks from his Father's demise are growing stronger—and making it clear that some fates really are worse than death.

The saga of the world's original antihero reaches new heights (and depths) in LUCIFER VOL. 2: FATHER LUCIFER, collecting issues #7–12 of the acclaimed new series from author Holly Black (*The Spiderwick Chronicles*) and artist Lee Garbett (*Loki*).

SUGGESTED FOR MATURE READERS
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# SON OF ULTRON

# "THIS FAN... THIS MONSTER!"